

Ladies and Gentlemen of the FCC:

Sinclair Broadcast Group's recent actions have illustrated the dangers to localism caused by media consolidation.

Sinclair is abusing regulations that address coverage of political candidates during campaigns. The program about John Kerry's actions in relation to his Vietnam-era experience that Sinclair plans to broadcast does NOT qualify as a news event or any of the other types of content that would exempt Sinclair from providing equal time and fair and balanced coverage of legally qualified candidates.

Therefore Sinclair is betraying the trust the FCC has given it to use the public airwaves.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. Their broadcasting of this biased, politically slanted program about John Kerry's Vietnam-related actions does NOT serve the public interest reflected in FCC regulations about coverage of political candidates, nor does it help voters make well-informed judgments about either Mr. Kerry or President Bush.

Sinclair's actions also indicate another serious problem the FCC must address. When large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

Please intervene with the power granted to you by Congress to stop Sinclair from broadcasting this program. Thank you.

Charles Aust